



Envisioning a National System of Marine Protected Areas: West Coast Region Public Dialogues San Francisco and Seattle

The past two decades have witnessed a dramatic increase in the use of marine protected areas (MPAs) as a conservation and management tool to protect the nation's most important ocean resources and areas. In response to this trend, Presidential Executive Order 13158 (May 26, 2000) directs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Protected Areas Center to work with the Department of the Interior and other agencies and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive, integrated national system of MPAs for the benefit of present and future generations.

Since its inception in 2001, the MPA Center has been gathering information to develop the national system in a way that will meet diverse conservation and sustainable use goals throughout U.S. waters by using the best available science and existing MPA authorities and programs. In order to ensure that the national system fully represents the nation's interests in the marine environment, the MPA Center is holding a series of regional public dialogues to solicit and collect input that will be used to develop the framework for the national system. Input and recommendations from stakeholders, agencies, authorities, and the MPA Federal Advisory Committee are cornerstone to the development of this guiding document. The framework will describe the goals of the national system, as well as the processes for designing and implementing it based on sound science and broad stakeholder input.

Each public dialogue will begin with an overview presentation about the process for developing the national system and subsequently provide participants with the opportunity to break into small groups to raise questions, discuss relevant issues, and provide input. The West Coast Region Public Dialogues are the fourth and fifth in the series of meetings.

West Coast Region Public Dialogues

San Francisco, California

When: December 12, 2005, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Where: The Presidio of San Francisco, Log Cabin, 1299 Storey Avenue, San Francisco, California 94129

Seattle, Washington

When: December 13, 2005, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Where: The Center for Wooden Boats, 1010 Valley Street, Seattle, Washington 98109

Due to limited space, all interested participants are requested to RSVP to mpa.comments@noaa.gov by **5 p.m., PDT, Friday, November 28, 2005** (please indicate which meeting you plan to attend).

Those who cannot attend due to space, schedule, or other limitations can find background materials at the web page listed below and may submit written comments to the e-mail address above. For more information on the national system and the West Coast Region Public Dialogues, please see: http://mpa.gov/national_system/.